

Building Momentum for Change

CHANGE IN MOTION

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“Plans are nothing; planning is everything.”

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER





Building Momentum for Change

The changes called for in the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan are significant, and they will have a positive impact on the region. Still, when we measure the extent of that progress, we find that it falls short of attaining the Transportation 2035 performance objectives set by the Commission — in some cases, well short. While the plan does make meaningful headway when it comes to reducing delay and keeping our system in a state of good repair, achieving appreciable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle travel proves to be a more elusive goal.

Overall, our performance assessment of this draft plan reminds us that surface infrastructure investments will not be sufficient to realize our ambitious goals for the Bay Area. To continue making progress toward our performance objectives — to keep change in motion — the Bay Area must take additional bold steps beyond the Transportation 2035 Plan.

Putting the Plan to the Test

How will the \$226 billion in investments contained in the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan improve the transportation network — and most importantly, the performance of that network — for Bay Area travelers? To answer this question, MTC planners assessed the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan against the set of performance objectives adopted by the Commission in early 2008 (see next page). The plan investments were run as a group through a computer model, then compared to the long-term trends projected for given measures of performance (such as greenhouse gas emissions), and to other Transportation 2035 performance objectives.



For illustrative purposes, we present here results of how the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan performed against several key performance objectives:

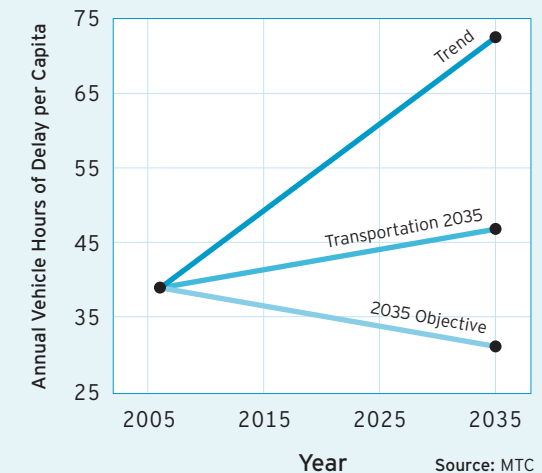
- reduce per-capita delay
- improve maintenance for transit and local roadways
- reduce carbon dioxide emissions
- reduce vehicle miles traveled

To view the complete results, see the *Transportation 2035 Plan Performance Assessment Report*, listed in Appendix 2.

Strategic Investments Help Reduce Congestion

The Draft Transportation 2035 Plan will help reduce freeway delay per person from a projected 72 hours a year to 47 hours a year. This is largely a result of the plan's investment in the Freeway Performance Initiative (FPI). As shown in the “what if” scenarios tested in Chapter 2, FPI strategies such as freeway ramp metering, changeable freeway message signs and coordination of traffic signals along adjacent arterials can significantly reduce delay. The planned Regional HOT Network and new transit capacity also will play a role. Yet the impressive reduction in delay that these investments achieve still falls short of the performance objective to reduce congestion to 31 hours per person per year (see chart above).

Vehicle Hours of Delay



Local Roadway Investment Maintains Status Quo, Slows Downward Slide

The performance objective chosen for local roadway maintenance — to reduce to 13 percent the share of local roadways in poor or failed condition — represents a practical target to improve the condition of our roads over the next 25 years. While it does not represent an optimal state of good repair for the region's roadways, the objective was deemed achievable as an interim step. Faced with competing needs for available revenues, the Commission elected to direct \$7 billion in discretionary funds to local roadways. This amount will only allow us to maintain the current state of repair, at which about 22 percent of local roadways are in poor or failed condition (see chart top left, page 82).

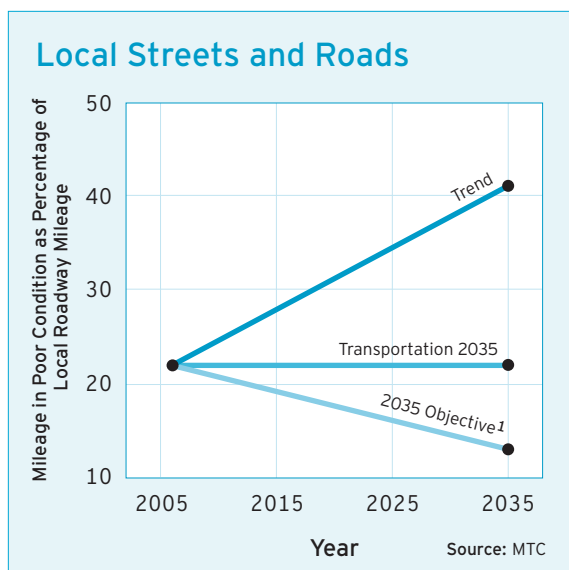
Transportation 2035 Performance Objectives

A performance-based planning approach focuses on the measurable outcomes of potential investments and the degree to which they support stated policies. It provides a decision-support tool to evaluate both transportation

policies and investments. In early 2008, the Commission adopted a comprehensive set of performance objectives for the Transportation 2035 Plan. The Commission will periodically measure progress made toward the per-

formance objectives, and may change these objectives in the future to better align them with Commission policy or respond to new circumstances.

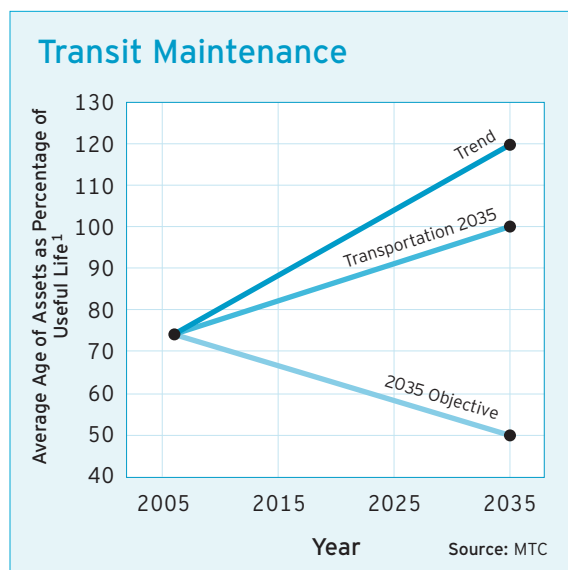
Three Es	Transportation 2035 Performance Objectives
Economy	Reduce per-capita delay by 20 percent from today by 2035
	Improve Maintenance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Roads: Maintain pavement condition index (PCI) of 75 or greater for local streets and roads • State Highways: Distressed pavement condition lane-miles not to exceed 10 percent of total system • Transit: 1. Achieve an average age for all asset types that is no more than 50 percent of their useful life; and 2. Increase the average number of miles between service calls for transit service in the region to 8,000 miles
	Reduce Collisions/Fatalities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce fatalities from motor vehicle collisions by 15 percent from today by 2035 • Reduce bicycle and pedestrian <i>fatalities</i> attributed to motor vehicle collisions by 25 percent (each) from 2000 by 2035 • Reduce bicycle and pedestrian <i>injuries</i> attributed to motor vehicle collisions by 25 percent (each) from 2000 by 2035
Environment	Reduce daily per-capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 10 percent from today by 2035
	Reduce Emissions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce emissions of fine particulates (PM_{2.5}) by 10 percent from today by 2035 • Reduce emissions of coarse particulates (PM₁₀) by 45 percent from today by 2035 • Reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2035
Equity	Decrease by 10 percent the combined share of low-income and lower-middle income residents' household income consumed by transportation and housing



¹ Decrease mileage in poor condition to no more than 13 percent. This is equivalent to the adopted objective to increase the average pavement condition index to 76.

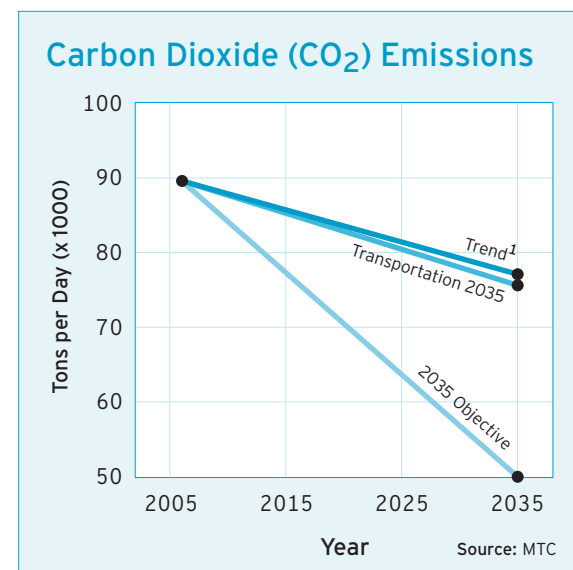
Transit Investment Fails to Hold the Line Against Aging Assets

The Bay Area's transit assets include transit vehicles, railway tracks, stations and maintenance facilities. The current average age of these assets is estimated to be 74 percent of useful life. If all assets were replaced on schedule at the end of their useful lives, over time, the average age of all assets would fall to 50 percent of useful life. Therefore, the 74 percent figure means that the region is not replacing its assets fast enough, and assets remain in service well after they should be replaced.



¹ Includes all asset types.

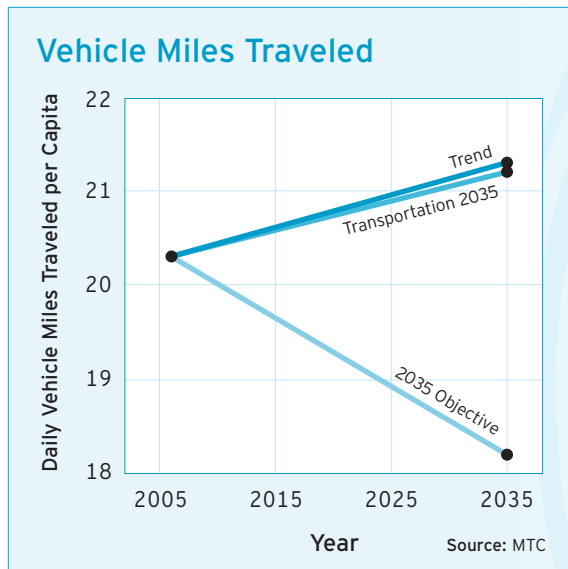
The Commission committed \$6.4 billion in discretionary funds to the transit maintenance program, which will allow the region to replace all of its transit vehicles on time, but is not sufficient to replace other types of transit assets on schedule. Replacement of assets such as stations, maintenance facilities and service vehicles will be deferred, requiring increasingly expensive maintenance and repairs, and potentially reducing system reliability and performance. The average age of all of the region's assets combined will continue to increase, reaching an estimated 100 percent of useful life by 2035. This is an improvement over the prevailing trend (see chart top middle), but the result falls far short of the Transportation 2035 performance objective.



¹ Trend line from 2006 to 2035 is simplified. Passenger and light-duty vehicle fuel economy improvements required by AB 32 are phased in between 2009 and 2020. CO₂ will continue to increase until about 2010, with a gradual decrease to 2035 as AB 1493 standards phase in and the existing vehicle fleet turns over with cleaner vehicles.

Plan Nudges Carbon Dioxide Emissions in Right Direction

The future trend for transportation-related carbon dioxide emissions is expected to move in the right direction, though largely due to advances in vehicle technologies and fuels mandated by state laws rather than infrastructure investments. For its part, the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan is projected to decrease daily carbon dioxide emissions from 77,000 tons per day to 76,000 tons per day — just a 2 percent reduction compared to the prevailing trend (see chart top right). This small reduction is due largely to the fact that 82 percent of all



resources in the draft plan are devoted to operating and maintaining the existing transportation network — which neither worsens nor improves the Bay Area’s carbon footprint. The bottom line is the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan falls well short of the 35 percent reduction that would be needed to reach the objective of 50,000 tons per day.

Plan Barely Makes a Dent in Reducing Miles Driven

The Bay Area’s very dynamism, as measured by projected growth in both population and jobs, poses a daunting challenge when it comes to reducing the number of miles driven by vehicles in the region. As shown in the chart above, the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan makes only a

negligible difference in this area, reducing daily vehicle miles traveled per person from 21.3 to 21.2. This is not within the reach of the objective of 18.2 vehicle miles per person. This result would seem to show the limitations of infrastructure improvements as a means to attain this particular objective. It also reflects the heavy maintenance emphasis of the draft plan’s investment focus as described above.

More Change Needed to Reach Performance Objectives

The results of the performance assessment show that while the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan points the region toward the right path, the plan’s initiatives and investments do not move the Bay Area far enough down that path. These results are not a surprise given the lessons we learned from the “what if” scenarios discussed in Chapter 2, where we found it will take considerably more than just infrastructure investments to reach our goals. We also learned that more-aggressive pricing and land-use strategies — beyond those included in this plan — offer potentially significant performance benefits.

But where earlier plans sought merely to slow the rate of our transportation network’s deterioration, the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan does dare to imagine actually reversing these trends.

It charts a bold new course that gets us on track to deliver change in motion.

Within the constraints of this Draft Transportation 2035 Plan, the Commission does indeed begin to take a number of bold steps towards change. These include doubling the Transportation for Livable Communities program that will support focused growth, and building the Regional HOT Network as a way to introduce transport pricing at a regional scale. To reduce delay and traffic congestion, MTC, Caltrans and other partners will implement a new Freeway Performance Initiative. To encourage more walking, bicycling and transit use, the Commission reaffirms its commitment to deliver the Resolution 3434 Regional Transit Expansion Program and the Regional Bicycle Network. Perhaps no investment recognizes the need for a multifaceted effort better than the multiagency Transportation Climate Action Campaign, which encourages behavior changes and funds innovative projects such as the Safe Routes to Schools and the Safe Routes to Transit programs.

But a bigger regional effort — with an agenda that includes more transport pricing, focused growth, technology advances and individual behavior changes in addition to infrastructure investments (see next page) — must be mounted to truly cause major change and put that change in motion. It will take all of us to build the momentum for change, and without a doubt, the Bay Area stands ready for the challenge.

Looking Beyond the Plan: The Next Wave of Change

For ideas on how to span the distance between where the region will be with the Draft Transportation 2035 Plan and where it needs to be to meet the plan's ambitious performance objectives, MTC turned to stakeholders who had been active in helping to shape the plan. Participants voiced their opinions in three separate forums:

- a roundtable discussion among MTC Commissioners and leaders from the major stakeholder organizations representing the Three Es of Economy, Environment and Equity
- a joint meeting for members of MTC's advisory committees (Elderly and Disabled, Minority Citizens, and the multi-interest Advisory Council)
- the Bay Area Partnership, consisting of top officials from major Bay Area transportation, land use and environmental protection agencies

The Discussion Centered on Five Issues

1. Fix It, *Finally*?

How can we eliminate the \$40 billion funding shortfall that keeps our roads, transit systems and highways from being first-rate? Potential strategies include:

- seeking rehabilitation funds in any infrastructure economic recovery package
- considering a "pennies for potholes" regional gas fee

- protecting state transit funding via new legislation or a ballot initiative

2. Transit Performance Initiative

Should major transit operators undertake a transit efficiency study and implement recommendations to increase ridership, service productivity and cost efficiency?

- Potential models include the recently adopted San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's *Transit Effectiveness Project* and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's comprehensive redesign of its bus network.

3. Green Commute/Green Parking Programs

Should the region develop a regional parking cash-out pilot program for employers and a parking/transit pass swap program for multifamily residential developers?

- San Francisco's Commuter Benefit Ordinance and MTC's new program that offers TransLink® cards to residents of transit-oriented developments are potential models.

4. Zero-Emission Municipal Fleet

Should the Bay Area's local governments lead the way by moving to green vehicle fleets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

- What percentage of the approximately 25,000 vehicles currently in the region's municipal fleet might we seek to convert?

5. Shape New Federal Transportation Bill

How can our region influence the debate on new federal surface transportation policies and funding — expected to be on the agenda in Washington throughout 2009 — to further Transportation 2035 goals?

The Dialogue Continues

MTC has heard a range of opinions on these questions, and will continue the public dialogue over the next few months prior to adoption of the Transportation 2035 Plan. Among the key messages heard to date are:

- MTC cannot implement these next steps on its own, but rather must forge partnerships with stakeholders and regional and local agencies.
- Legislative advocacy at both the state and federal levels must be directed toward helping the region secure the authority and resources needed to take action in these areas.
- While some steps may be implemented immediately, most will take several years to develop and execute.

The aim of this ongoing effort is to help challenge the region to look at different ways of tackling some of the persistent problems it faces in an era of dynamic change.